Committees. These things I cannot explain now. I said that a Committee, consisting of officials and non-officials, might determine the details of these committees. I am not convinced that Standing Committies are not at all necessary, but as most of the members of this House desired that we should be satisfied with a Finance Committee, I do not wish to press my motion.

PRESIDENT: Do you withdraw this resolution?

MR. M. R MADHAVA VARIAR: Yes, Sir.

The resolution was withdrawn with the permission of the House.

RESOLUTION *RE.* PROHIBITION OF THE MANUFACTURE AND IMPORTATION OF LIQUOR.

PRESIDENT: The next resolution also stands in the name of Mr. Madhava Variar and it runs as follows:

"That this Council recommends to the Government that the manufacture and importation of liquor be completely prohibited except for medicinal and industrial purposes".

I call upon Mr. Madhava Variar to move his resolution.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Sir, I beg to move that this Council recommends to the Government that the manufacture and importation of liquor should be completely prohibited except for medicinal and industrial purposes. I am constrained to move this resolution because the drink habit is ruining the labour classes of our country, destroying the soul of our people, breaking up homes and breeding brutality and crime to an unprecedented degree, and because, if this curse of humanity is not immediately removed, our beautiful State of Travancore will fall an easy prey to this terrible monster. I am sure that there will not be two opinions in the country and in this House about the resolution which I have the honour to move, and I confidently believe that every one in this House will agree with me in saying that this evil should be absolutely and immediately prohibited. I ask this House to recommend to Government the complete prohibition of manufacture and importation of liquor because, though the Government heartily support us in our temperance activities, they are unprepared to stop it in the near future. The Dewan in his reply to Mr. Karayalar's representation in the 18th Session of the Popular Assembly said:

"In regard to the abkari policy of the Government, or the drink policy as you call it the Government are at one with you in the view that drink should be gradually abolished and that the revenue from abkari should disappear eventually.

Whether all abkari taxation should be abolished at one stroke or whether it should be effected gradually is the question. It is a very important question and is one which has not been solved in other places. The question is one which teems with difficulties. If you abolish abkari taxation, it does not follow that you abolish drinking. Illicit drinking is bound to come into existence if that is done. However, Government are entirely in agreement with you in thinking that abkari revenue should not be a source of profit and in course of time that revenue should disappear and I have no doubt in regard to it whatever. The staying power of the people and the resources of the Government are bound to increase with the abolition of the drink evil, but any sudden or drastic measures cannot but be disastrous.

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar.]

As the Government have fully agreed to the principle underlying my resolution, the only questions which we have to consider now are whether the drink evil can be abolished at a stroke, whether immediate abolition will be disastrous to the people, whether such experiment has been tried elsewhere and found successful, and whether gradual abolition of drinking has been a success anywhere under the sun.

The first question we have to consider is whether the drink evil can be gradually abolished under the circumstances by the Excise Department. When this department was organised and when a Regulation was passed to guide it, the Government intended to promote temperance and to put a stop to illicit manufacture, importation and consumption of this deleterious and dangerous poison. Mr. P. Thanu Pillai, in his speech in the Legislative Council, when introducing the Abkari Bill, which subsequently became Regulation IV of 1074, said:

"The object of the Abkari Department is, it should be borne in mind, no less moral than fiscal—indeed is more in the interest of public morality than of public revenue."

Similarly the Secretary of State for India in a despatch dated 14th March 1889 says—

"That taxation of the sale of intoxicating liquors is imposed primarily in order to restrain the consumption of such liquors and not for the purpose of making money out of their sale."

From these extracts it is abundantly clear that the object of the Regulation and of the Excise Department is to save the people from the pernicious habit of drinking. But we have to see whether the Excise Department is working towards this goal. If we examine the history of the excise administration of a few years and if we compare the revenue and the number of shops given in the administration reports for the last ten years, we will be appalled to find that drinking is increasing to an alarming extent. If the department is allowed to go on in its own way, the country will soon be drenched in alcohol. The revenue from the manufacture, importation and sale of liquors rose from Rs. 27 lakhs in 1087 to Rs 32½ lakhs in 1091 and it has risen to Rs. 47 lakhs in 1096. Mr. Van Ross, in answer to a question put by Mr. K. C. Raja Raja Varma, says that drinking is diminishing and that the number of shops are reduced every year. There were 1,430 shops in 1091 against 1,508 in 1095. Of these 555 shops were independent and 475 those of vend-renters. We, temperance workers, can challenge Mr. Van Ross to prove this statement and can assert that this figure is entirely false and that there are more than 550 shops in Shertallai alone. The statistics collected by the Government and published in the Administration Reports are misleading and inaccurate and I shall quote one example to justify this strong statement. Under the present rules the toddy contractor is authorised by the Government to open 150 shops in Shertallai. Their limits are specified in a notification published in the Government Gazette. The contractor is to purchase from the toddy-drawers who work under a license issued by him all the toddy produced by the labourers and to sell it from the shops where it is stocked to consumers through agents employed by the contractor. The toddy-drawers are strictly prohibited from selling toddy in their houses. These rules are honoured more in their breach than in

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their observance. Each toddy-drawer's house is a shop and one may safely assert that there are as many shops in that area as there are toddy-drawers. In a recent meeting of the temperance workers at Aryad near Alleppey which was held within the boundaries of a shop in Shertallai specified in the Gazette—

MR. A. J. VAN ROSS: May I know where the shop is?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: Shop No. 1. In that meeting, with Mr. N. K. Narayana Pillai B. A., B. L., in the chair, one of the speakers pointed out to Mr. Gopalaswami Pillai, the Inspector of Police, who was present in the meeting, that there was no such shop as shop No. 1, where toddy was sold and that this was one of a rich crop of cases that awaited detection at his hands.

The Excise Department is not at all being worked according to the rules which our Government have promulgated or the orders which the department has passed for its guidance. Mr. Hoogwerf, one of the retired excise officers of the State, in his speech at the last session of the Council remarked—

"That the whole scheme is worked not only on an incorrect understanding of the spirit and letter of the Regulation, but for the one and only purpose for which the department is supposed to exist, viz., the collection of revenue which has become an obsession and a fetish".

Sir, it is very easy to illustrate this dictum by a wealth of examples. According to the rules published in the Government Gazette dated the 10th Kumbham, 1097, above the signature of the Dewan, no shop shall be kept open after 8 o'clock in the night. I shall show how, in the heart of this capital city, under the very nose of the Excise Commissioner, this rule is flagrantly and openly violated. Yesterday while myself, Mr. M. N. Pillai, and Mr. T. K. Madhavan, one of the prominent temperance workers, were going about to ascertain the temperance condition of the town, we went to Kunnukuzhi and noticed toddy shop No. 19, situated hardly within a furlong of the residence of Mr. Van Ross, and found a luminous board in front of it with the following writing in Malayalam: "കാലത്തു 7 മണി മുതൽ രാത്രി 8 മണി വരെ തുറന്നിരിക്കുന്നതാണ്". I am informed by a friend that, as a result of our investigation, that writing was corrected this afternoon. The members of this House can very well guess what will be the state of mofussil shops if rules are violated thus in this very city. I can challenge any body to show me a single shop throughout the length and breadth of Travancore which conforms to the rules promulgated by the Government. If this is the way in which the department is worked, I cannot understand how prohibition can be brought about gradually. I cannot understand how the dictum "maximum of revenue with minimum of consumption" can hold good. I cannot understand how this department can be of any help to the temperance movement. The maximum of revenue with minimum of consumption has been discredited in every civilised country. By putting a high tax on liquors and making the State dependent to a large degree upon such revenue, the liquor interests secure in all countries a powerful influence in support of this monopoly.

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[Mr. M. R. Madhava Variar.]

The Americans were forced to pass a law of prohibition because they found after a bitter experience of twenty-seven years that the Excise Department could not achieve prohibition. When they became convinced of the drink evil they put a stop to it immediately without caring a bit for the loss of revenue. Bhavnagar, one of the progressive Indian States in North India, has gone dry without much effort. Baroda is on the brink of being dry.

MR. S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR: May I ask Mr. Madhava Variar whether any legislation has been undertaken there?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR: The people are trying and the Government are helping them.

I cannot understand why what is possible in Bhavnagar and Baroda is not possible in Travancore which we claim to be the Model State and which is ruled by one of the most enlightened Maha Rajas. It has been most clearly proved, if proofs were wanted, that in America the material, social, and religious condition of the people has considerably improved by prohibition. I shall read a few extracts from *Dry America* written by Mr. St. Nihal Singh:

(1) No one who knows Americans would attempt to explain the success of the prohibition movement by dwelling upon its purely moral aspect. They are a matter of fact people used in the first and last instance to subjecting everything to the acid test of "Does it pay?" Americans banned alcohol because they felt convinced that the consumption of liquors did not pay—from the point of view of either individual or national efficiency and prosperity. Efficiency is the God they worship. Nothing short of the conviction that drink, even in moderate quantities, handicapped the individual and the nation in the race of life would have compelled them to take the action that they did.

(2) About 25 years ago the American Railway Association upon which the owners of 25,000 miles of railway in all parts of the United States are represented framed a series of rules which they strongly urged the railway companies to adopt.

(3) The attendance statistics issued by the Cadillac Motor Car Company showed that under prohibition there had been a decrease of 33 per cent. in lateness among its employees who numbered about 8,000 men while there had been a decrease of 69 per cent. in hours lost by absence on Mondays and 44 per cent. in time lost on other days.

(4) Experience has proved that these fears were entirely groundless. Food stuffs which formerly went into the brewers' or distillers' vats are since the inauguration of prohibition, used as food.

(5) One of the first effects of the dry policy was to raise the general standard of living to make people who erstwhile had lived almost exclusively upon beans in order to find money for beer and whisky vary their diet and eat fruit food in packages and fancy groceries. The farmer, in consequence, found a ready market at high prices for everything he had to sell.

(6) Brewers, distillers and vendors of intoxicating liquors were the ones who, every one excepted, would suffer by the most thorough prohibition. No one therefore was more surprised than they at the turn of affairs after prohibition came in. Former breweries and distilleries are now manufacturing denatured or industrial alcohol, vinegar, malted soft drinks, ice cream, maraschino, cherries, preserves, jams, syrup, sugar, flour, milk, and other equally harmless products.

I shall quote very many passages to point out the effect of prohibition on capital, labour and society. It is as true of India as of the United States that the State derives only a small amount of the money actually spent upon drink. Only a few years ago we used to be told that the Government of India could not sacrifice the opium revenue and that plea was used to force our opium upon the Chinese who were not in a condition to resist. Within the last few years, however, that policy has had to be abandoned and the revenue from that source has in consequence greatly decreased. The Government have

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not felt the pinch although it has had to meet the tremendous obligations arising out of the war. If the authorities take the trouble, the loss from revenue can also be counteracted. Any temporary difficulty that may be experienced in making the necessary financial adjustments should not in any case be permitted to stand in the way of a reform which confirms the religion and traditions of the people and which demonstrably will confer incalculable benefits upon them."

So I move that this resolution be accepted by this Council and the Excise Department be worked properly.

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN. മദ്യം ഔഷധത്തിന്നായോ വ്യവസായകാര്യങ്ങൾക്കായോ അല്ലാതെ ഇറക്കുമതി ചെയ്യുകയോ വിൽക്കുകയോ പാടില്ലെന്നുള്ള എന്റെ മാന്യസ്നേഹിതൻ മിസ്റ്റർ മാധവവാര്യരുടെ പ്രമേയത്തെ ഞാൻ പൂർണ്ണമായി അനുകൂലിക്കുന്നു. എന്തെന്നാൽ ഈ പ്രമേയം നയമസഭയുടേയും ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്റേയും ശ്രേഷ്ഠമായ ഉദ്ദേശങ്ങൾക്ക് എതൃയും അനുയോജ്യമായിരിക്കുന്നു. ജനങ്ങളുടെ ക്ഷേമത്തേയും, സമാധാനത്തേയും, ഐശ്വര്യത്തേയും നശിപ്പിച്ചുകൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു ദുഷ്ടശക്തിയെ ബന്ധിക്കുന്നതിനാണല്ലോ ഈ പ്രമേയത്താൽ ഉദ്ദേശിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതു്. മദ്യം നിമിത്തം ഭവനങ്ങൾതോറും ദേശങ്ങൾതോറും ഉണ്ടായിക്കൊണ്ടിരിക്കുന്ന കലഹങ്ങളും നിയമലംഘനങ്ങളും പൊതുജനങ്ങൾക്കു് അനുഭവമാകുന്ന കഷ്ടതകളും ഇവിടെ വിവരിച്ചു് അറിയിക്കേണ്ടിയിരിക്കുന്നില്ല. മദ്യത്തിന്റെ ഇറക്കുമതിയും വില്പനയും നിറുത്തുന്നതുകൊണ്ടു ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു വലുതായ ഒരു സംഖ്യ നഷ്ടം നേരിട്ടേക്കുമെങ്കിലും അതിനെക്കാൾ വലുതായ ഒരു സംഖ്യ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു ലാഭമുണ്ടാകുന്നതും, ധനത്താൽ ലഭ്യങ്ങളല്ലാത്ത സദാചാരം, സമാധാനം മുതലായ ഗുണങ്ങൾ രാജ്യത്തിനു ലഭിക്കുന്നതുമാണു്. മദ്യത്തിനായി ജനങ്ങൾ കൊടുക്കുന്ന പണത്തിൽ ഒരു വലിയ പങ്കു് വിദേശമദ്യത്തിന്റെ വകയായി രാജ്യത്തിനു പുറത്തുപോകുന്നു. ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു കിട്ടുന്ന പണത്തിൽ ഒരുപങ്കു് ഗവർൺമെൻറ് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുടെ ശമ്പളമായും പോകുന്നു. പിന്നെ ഒരുപങ്കേ ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു കിട്ടുന്നൊള്ളു. എന്നാൽ മദ്യം നിറുത്തുന്നപക്ഷം ഈ സംഖ്യയെല്ലാം തന്നെ ജനങ്ങൾക്കു ലഭിക്കാവുന്നതാണു്. ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു് എക്സൈസ് ഉദ്യോഗസ്ഥന്മാരുടെ ശമ്പളച്ചിലവും കുറയ്ക്കാം. നമ്മുടെ പണം അന്യരാജ്യത്തേക്കു പോകുന്നതും ഇല്ലാതെയാക്കാം. ജനങ്ങൾ ഐശ്വര്യത്തിലിരിക്കുന്ന ഒരു രാജ്യത്തു് ആ രാജ്യത്തെ ഗവർൺമെൻറിനു രാജ്യകാര്യനിർവഹണത്തിനുള്ള പണം ന്യായമായ ഏതു മാർഗ്ഗങ്ങളിൽ കൂടെയും ജനങ്ങളിൽ നിന്നു പിരിക്കാവുന്നതാണു്. പ്രജകളിൽ ഓരോരുത്തരുടെയും എന്നപോലെതന്നെ ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്റെ ധനവും ഒരു സാമ്യത്തിനായുള്ള സാധനമാണല്ലോ.

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ഗവർൺമെൻറിൻറെ ധനം ജനങ്ങളുടെ ക്ഷേമത്തിന്നായി ചിലവുചെയ്യുവാനുള്ള സാധനമത്രെ. ജനങ്ങളുടെ ക്ഷേമത്തെക്കാൾ ഗവർൺമെൻറു ധനത്തെ കാര്യമായി ഗണിച്ചു പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നപക്ഷം അതിൽ നിന്നുള്ള ഫലം വണ്ടിയുടെ പുറകെ കുതിരയെ കെട്ടുന്നതുപോലെയായിരിക്കും. ജനങ്ങളുടെ ഇടയിൽ കലഹങ്ങളുണ്ടാക്കി സമാധാനത്തെ നശിപ്പിക്കുന്ന ദുരാചാരവാന്മാരെ ശിക്ഷിക്കുന്നതിന്ന നിയമങ്ങൾ ഉണ്ടാക്കി ജനക്ഷേമത്തെ കാക്കുന്നതിന്ന നിയമസഭയും ഗവർൺമെൻറും പ്രവർത്തിക്കുന്നു. എന്നാൽ ഗവർൺമെൻറനുമതിയോടെ നടത്തപ്പെടുന്ന മദ്യഷാപ്പുകൾ ജനവാസമുള്ള തെരുവീഥികളിലും റോഡരികുകളിലും ധാരാളം കാണപ്പെടുന്നു. അവിടെനിന്നും മദ്യപാനം ചെയ്തു പുറത്തിറങ്ങി ലഹള കൂട്ടുന്നവരെ അടക്കുവാൻ ചെയ്യുന്നതിനും ബന്ധിക്കുന്നതിന്നുമായി അവയുടെ സമീപത്തുതന്നെ പോലീസ സ്റ്റേഷനുകളിൽ വിലങ്ങുകളോടും മറ്റു ഉപകരണങ്ങളോടും ഗവർൺമെൻറിനാൽ നിയുക്തന്മാരായ പോലീസ്കാരും സ്ഥിതിചെയ്യുന്നുണ്ട്. ഇവർതന്നെയും ചിലപ്പോൾ മദ്യപാനത്തിന്ന വശപ്പെട്ടുപോകുന്നു. പരസ്പരവിരുദ്ധമായ ഈ സ്ഥിതിയിൽനിന്ന ഗവർൺമെൻറ് ഒരു വശത്തുകൂടി കാരണത്തെ പ്രോത്സാഹിപ്പിക്കുന്നതായും മറ്റൊരു വശത്തുകൂടി കാര്യത്തെ തടുക്കുവാൻ തുടങ്ങുന്നതായും സാധാരണ തോന്നിപ്പോകുന്നു. കാര്യത്തെ തടയുന്നതിനെക്കാൾ കാരണത്തെ തടയുന്നതാണല്ലോ ഉത്തമമായിട്ടുള്ളതു്. അതിനാൽ ഗവർൺമെൻറിന്ന ധനസംബന്ധമായുണ്ടാകുന്ന നഷ്ടത്തെ ഗണിക്കാതെ രാജ്യവാസികളുടെ പൊതുനന്മയെ ലാക്കാക്കി മദ്യം ഇറക്കുമതി ചെയ്യുന്നതിനേയും വിൽക്കുന്നതിനേയും വിരോധിക്കണമെന്ന ഞാൻ മിസ്റ്റർ മാധവവായ്യരുടെ പ്രമേയത്തോടു ചേർന്ന അഭിപ്രായപ്പെട്ടു കൊള്ളുന്നു.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI: മിസ്റ്റർ കുഞ്ഞിത്തൊമ്മൻ മദ്യം എന്നതിൽ പുകയില കഞ്ചാവ് മുതലായ സാധനങ്ങളെക്കൂടി ഉൾപ്പെടുത്തുന്നുണ്ടൊ?

PRESIDENT: The resolution covers only liquor.

MR TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN:: ഇല്ല. പുകയില മുതലായ സാധനങ്ങൾക്കു സ്പല്പലഹരിയുണ്ടെങ്കിലും ഞാൻ മുമ്പു പ്രസ്താവിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതുപോലെയുള്ള കലഹങ്ങൾ അതുകൊണ്ട് ഉണ്ടാകാത്തതിനാൽ ഞാൻ അവയെ ഒഴിച്ചു, കുടിക്കുന്ന മദ്യങ്ങളെപ്പറ്റിയാണ് പ്രസ്താവിച്ചതു്. പ്രമേയത്തിൻറ പ്രയോക്താവും കുടിക്കുന്ന മദ്യങ്ങളെ മാത്രമേ ഉദ്ദേശിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള എന്നാണ് ഞാൻ വിശ്വസിക്കുന്നതു്.

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MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Sir, it may raise a smile in the faces of the members on the other side of the House to see an ex-excise officer standing up to support this motion. The Excise Commissioner may accuse me of having become a heretic, but I shall try to show that I am still true to my salt and my country, and that the paper I am now reading should not be condemned with bell, book and candle. This is what I said in my speech at the last session of this Council, in connection with the appointment of Sub-Inspectors:

"It should never be forgotten that abkari laws are not fiscal, but prohibition or temperance laws to put down drink, and it is on the birthright of the people, the yield of the cocoanut and other palms, that taxes and duties are imposed, on the plea of minimising drink. These laws have to be worked with the greatest caution and the least hardship to the people".

I beg to repeat this to-day also before this House.

The first time we hear of arrack and toddy in past history is in a Royal Proclamation prohibiting distillation. The tapping of toddy was entirely free, but most of it was sweet toddy, which was made into jaggery. After some time, farmers or contractors came forward to pay money for the privilege of manufacturing arrack and toddy. Toddy arrack, which used to be distilled in earthen pots, was then pure, but drinkers were few and far between, as public opinion was against drinking, which was considered to be disreputable. All this was changed when Mr. Nadar of Madras abkari fame appeared on the scene. Government having got the taste of money and found the whole business to be a very lucrative one, farmed out the whole State to him on the principle of maximum of revenue at minimum trouble to Government. He was given *carte blanch* in the *modus operandi* of collecting revenue and the vending of liquors. *Patta* arrack took the place of the pure stuff distilled in earthen pots from toddy. The people looked upon this liquor distilled in copper pot-stills from jaggery and the bark of certain trees as an abomination; but they had to grin and bear, as temperance and the people's health began to be foreign to Government, with the introduction of a foreign contractor and his foreign brand. It is an irony that, in a land abounding in cocoanut and other palms, only a very limited portion of the people should be given the liquor distilled from the yield of palm trees. Excise revenue increased and the foreign contractor and his employees, mostly foreigners, fattened on the land. The system of vending liquor has been undergoing some change. But the foreign contractor and the *patta* arrack which he introduced appear to have come to stay. The revenue, which in recent years went up as a rocket, is now coming down like a bundle of sticks.

I shall not deal with the policy of Government, which appears to have been crystallised in the formula "maximum of revenue with minimum of consumption", nor with the administration of the Excise Department execept to say that it is being carried on on wrong lines, and that the abkari laws are being applied against the whole spirit and letter of the Regulation governing excise administration.

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[Mr. A. Hoogewerf.]

Is prohibition practicable? Is it possible to do away with this large revenue derived from the sale of intoxicants—arrack, toddy, opium and ganja—without crippling and embarrassing Government? How is it to be substituted? Would not the licensed tapper and vendor be replaced by the illicit tapper and the illicit distiller, vendor and smuggler, and won't a large revenue be lost without any corresponding gain either to the Government or the people? Will not an additional burden be placed, particularly on the agricultural classes, to make good this revenue? Is it not better for the social reformer to devote himself to the mental, moral and social uplift of the backward classes, for by so doing he will be assisting those natural forces which are already working towards temperance? Would it not be interferring with the liberty of the people not to allow them to drink? Should the well-behaved man be deprived of his glass of wine, beer, or whisky and soda, just because a considerable number of people make bad use of them and ruin themselves thereby? Why should the poor labourer be deprived of his pot of toddy after a hard day's work, which makes him happy and think he is just as good as the King of England or the President of the American Republic? These, I admit, are questions that have to be seriously and calmly considered, before prohibition should be thought of.

Excise revenue, as I have said before, is an immoral revenue, and we should do everything in our power to stop collecting such revenue. Sir T. Sadasiva Aiyar, one of the brilliant Chief Justices who adorned the High Court of Travancore and lately a Judge of the Madras High Court, in a lecture delivered at Cuddalore, on July 24th, last year, said that the question of temperance was not a new one in India, as in the days of the Mahabharata the habit of drinking intoxicants was common and the vice of drunkenness not by any means unknown. It was Sankaracharya, he said, who stopped the custom of drinking among the Brahmins, because it injured the spiritual growth of men. Drunkenness has been made one of the five deadly sins, and this not in Hinduism alone, but in other religions, notably Islam. The Christian religion also imposed temperance. Sir Sadasiva Aiyar said that it was our duty to stop this curse. Our goal must be prohibition for the whole of India. He was not unaware of the financial difficulties which might temporarily arise; but with the improved economic condition of the people, the revenue would be found from other sources. "We consider this curse" he said "a worse curse than war, and therefore, we must fight to a finish, and we must fight for prohibition." I have quoted this great man in preference to many other great men who are working in the noble cause of temperance, because he once belonged to us and stands first among the great men of India not only in intellectual attainments and legal lore, but in sobriety and catholicity of views, loyalty to Government and spirituality of soul. Mahatma Gandhi said:

"The State does not cater for the vices of its people. We do not regulate or license houses of ill-fame. We do not provide facilities for thieves to indulge in their propensity for thieving. I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution. Is it not often the parent of both?"

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Resolutions for temperance and prohibition have been brought before all the Legislative Assemblies in India, and in every Council the non-official members have unanimously voted for them. The Governments, particularly those of Bombay and Punjab, have made big strides forward. The great and mighty American nation has gone dry. Why should not India with an ancient civilisation she can well be proud of, do the same? This is the question asked everywhere. Why, I would humbly ask, should not Travancore, where Hinduism is the State religion, also do likewise, especially as the country is now almost ready for it?

Prohibition is not impracticable. This House will quite understand the difficulty of Government in giving up such a large revenue with a single stroke of the pen. I am sure this House does not wish anything revolutionary or drastic to be done at once. But the angle of vision must be changed immediately. Government should begin to realise that the revenue from drink and other intoxicants is not the revenue with which it should carry on the administration. Drink and other intoxicants should no longer be looked upon as necessary evils. It should realise its responsibility to the people and look at the whole question from a moral standpoint and take a far-sighted, generous and parental view and strike at the evil root and branch. The people also must wholeheartedly co-operate with the Government in this matter.

Will not the loss of revenue cripple Government? Yes, partially, but only temporarily. But it is because we had a lot of cloth, which we purchased cheaply, that our coats were made longer than necessary. I beg to be pardoned for repeating here that there is a great deal of unnecessary expenditure, which could very well be avoided. I must also be pardoned for saying that we are spending too much money in the wrong way. There is no sense of proportion anywhere, and no settled policy. When the non-official members effected a cut of 9 crores of rupees in the Imperial Legislative Assembly, it was said that the whole administration of India would come to a stand still. I think we are carrying on and no earthquake has shaken the administrative machinery or made the country the worse for it. Economic condition is bound to improve as in the case of dry America, in spite of all the wet lies that have been said against her. If the poor man does not drink, he will have money to educate his children. I have moved among the people everywhere in Travancore, and I have seen, with a saddened heart, the terrible havoc that the drink evil has wrought on the labouring classes, especially those living on the coast,—and very often it is vile stuff that is given to these poor people to drink, datura leaf being, sometimes, used to make the stuff more intoxicating. The nakedness, the poverty, the perpetual quarrels in families, and the early deaths of bread-winners are enough to make men and even angels weep. I can answer all the other questions I have raised *seriatim*, but I cannot do so, as the little time—10 minutes—allowed to me is fast passing or has already passed. I earnestly appeal to this Council, the Government members included, in the name of humanity, to find the ways and means to do away with this

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[The President.]

revenue, and do all in their power to help the people out of this terrible misery. It is useless preaching temperance to the people when there are taverns opened on the roadside with blazing lights attracting them to go in. We have to take heed of the signs of the times. The national conscience has been awakened and we must act promptly and do things with a good grace, before matters take a wrong course. As I have said before, a sober, prosperous and God-fearing people is a greater asset in a country's balance sheet than rupees, chackrams and cash.

If I am permitted to make a suggestion to the mover of the resolution, I would recommend that Government once more declare that absolute prohibition is their policy, and so direct the excise administration with the help of advisory committees to achieve this end, within 5 to 10 years.

MR. K. DOMINIC TOMMAN: May I ask Mr. Hoogewerf a question—whether wine is included in the category of foreign liquor?

MR. A. HOOGEWERF: Absolutely, Sir.

PRESIDENT: Gentlemen, it is time, and we must suspend business here. The rest of the business on the agenda will lie over and will have to be taken up to-morrow.

The House has to elect six members for the Select Committee to consider the amendments to Standing Orders, leave to introduce which has been given by the Council. I request you to do so under the presidency of the Deputy President.

The House adjourned at 5-12 P. M.

S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.

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